



Maryland Port Administration

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GOVERNOR EHRLICH ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT WITH MERCEDES-BENZ USA AT PORT OF BALTIMORE

Contract Features Direct Tie Between Auto Manufacturer and the State

BALTIMORE, MD (April 14, 2003) – On a day when 1,500 new Mercedes-Benz automobiles arrived at the Port of Baltimore, Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. announced an important new agreement that retains and strengthens the business ties between the world-renown automobile manufacturer and the Maryland Port Administration (MPA), which operates the Port of Baltimore's public marine terminals.

"This is a new day for old friends," said Governor Ehrlich, as he described the long-term contract that allows Mercedes-Benz USA to lease property on Dundalk Marine Terminal directly from the MPA. "This is a partnership grounded in quality. Mercedes-Benz USA, a company that has earned the finest reputation, recognizes the assets that the Port of Baltimore and the State of Maryland have to offer. From the Port's strategic location and world-class labor force to Maryland's investment in making the Port of Baltimore one of the world's best – high-quality companies want to do business here in Maryland."

The contract, which features a 10-year agreement with two 10-year renewal options, guarantees that a minimum of 280,500 Mercedes-Benz vehicles will come through the Port of Baltimore during the first term of the contract. This is the first time the MPA is leasing acreage on Dundalk Marine terminal directly to an automobile manufacturer.

"As this port feeds Mercedes-Benz' passenger cars and light trucks into all of the Northeast, Midwest and Mid-Atlantic states, the company's plans rely heavily on this ever-growing 38-year relationship," said Rick Schubert, Mercedes-Benz' Maryland Vehicle Preparation Center Manager.

Maryland Transportation Secretary Robert L. Flanagan hosted today's announcement, which also featured remarks from Aris Melissaratos, Secretary of Maryland's Department of Business and Economic Development, and representatives from Wallenius Wilhelmsen Lines and Mercedes-Benz USA.

"One of the key elements of this agreement is the commitment Mercedes is demonstrating to the Port of Baltimore and the thousands of men and women who work here," said Maryland Transportation Secretary Robert L. Flanagan. "We now have a solid foundation on which to build an even stronger partnership with one of the world's finest automakers. The future is bright for Mercedes and the Port of Baltimore."

Mercedes-Benz USA and the Port of Baltimore began their partnership in 1965, when the auto manufacturer recognized the Port as the most advantageous point of entry for distributing its luxury cars.

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“This deal is in-line with the Port’s strategic plan to solidify and grow the automobile business at the Port of Baltimore,” said the Port’s Executive Director Jim White. “Mercedes-Benz USA is an extremely valuable member of our automobile family. This contract strengthens our relationship and gives both parties what we need to grow and prosper.”

Mercedes-Benz USA, headquartered in Montvale, N.J., is responsible for the sales, service and marketing of Mercedes-Benz products in the U.S. MBUSA sold 213,225 vehicles in the U.S. during 2002, setting the highest sales volume ever in its history for the sixth consecutive record-breaking year.

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